

Applicants believe there is no proper impetus or motivation to attempt to combine these references.

However, even assuming *arguendo* that a skilled worker were to attempt to combine the teachings of Daniels with those of Schaupp, the result would still not correspond to the claimed invention. The combination of Schaupp and Daniels fails to teach or reasonably suggest **all** of the limitations of claims 1-7 and 15.

The fuel filter of claim 1 comprises a housing with a distinct enclosure for collecting water situated on the clean side of the filter within the housing and drain devices for separated water on both the unfiltered (upstream) side and the clean (downstream) side of the filter. The references do not disclose or suggest this combination of features.

Schaupp discloses a fuel filter with draining devices that are positioned on the upstream and downstream sides of a coalescing medium (27). However, Schaupp does not teach a draining device that is positioned on the clean side of the filter medium (28). Moreover, as acknowledged in the Office Action, Schaupp does not disclose an enclosure for collecting water situated on the clean side of the filter within the housing.

Daniels fails to remedy these deficiencies of Schaupp. Daniels merely discloses a gas filter comprising first and second housings 61 and 75 connected in series, each containing a respective filter element 30 or 32. Each housing has a single drain 64 or 74, respectively, on the upstream or unfiltered side of the filters, but neither has a housing with a distinct water collecting enclosure on the clean side of the filter or a device for draining off water on the clean side of the filter within the housing. Nothing in Daniels would motivate one to incorporate an enclosure for collecting water on the clean side of the filter medium in the housing of Schaupp. The result of attempting to combine the teachings of Daniels with those of Schaupp would merely be to arrange two of the Schaupp filters in series, but this would not correspond to the fuel filter of claims 1-7 and

15. Thus, the combination of references fails to make out a proper, *prima facie*, case of obviousness, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to claims 8-14, Hoffman merely discloses an automatic drain system with a servomechanism for separating a liquid from a compressed gas. Hoffman does not remedy the deficiencies of Schaupp and Daniels as discussed above. Accordingly, dependent claims 8-14 are respectfully submitted to be patentable with parent claims 1, 2 and 7.


In view of the foregoing, the application is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance, and prompt, favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned at (202) 624-2845 would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #037141.53216US).

Respectfully submitted,

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